

Attorney Docket No. P12685-US1
Customer Number 27045

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1.) Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 1-7, 17, 19, 21, 23-25, 29, and 37. Claims 8-16, 20, 22, 26, and 34-36 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 1-7, 17-19, 21, 23-25, 27-33, and 37-40 are pending in the application. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

2.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

In paragraphs 2-3 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Applicants have canceled claim 10 as noted below in paragraph 4.

3.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

In paragraphs 4-5 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-2, 4-7, 17-21, 23, 25, 27-35, 37-38 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Obara (US 5,204,857). Of these claims, claims 20, 34, and 35 have been canceled. The Applicants have amended the remaining claims to better distinguish the claimed invention from Obara. The Examiner's consideration of the amended claims is respectfully requested.

As fully disclosed in the present application and further provided in the response to the previous office action, as broadband switches (such as ATM switches) are newly introduced into an existing telecommunication network, rather than completely switching over from using existing narrowband switches (such as STM switches) to the newly developed ATM switches, there is a need for gradually introducing such ATM switches into an already existing telecommunications network. For a switch to function properly, it requires both call connection functionalities as well as call control functionalities. The present invention maximizes the utilization of call control functionalities provided by switching intelligence or call control applications within an existing narrowband switch,

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and avoids requiring a newly introduced broadband switch to include both call connection functionalities as well as call control functionalities. The switching intelligence or call control applications within the narrowband switch are used to control and to provide call control functionalities to the broadband (i.e., ATM) switch.

As an illustration, an existing legacy switch (such as Ericsson's AXE switch) already fully equipped with all of the necessary call control functions (such as call setup, call waiting, three-way calling, call transfer, etc.) is used to control and to provide call control functionalities over the newly introduced broadband switch as well. By allowing the existing narrowband switch to control the newly introduced broadband switch and to provide the necessary call control functionalities, rather than redesigning and introducing brand new call control functionalities for the newly introduced switch, existing functionalities with the existing narrowband switch can instead be economically and conveniently reused.

Amended claim 1 recites an arrangement for combining narrowband and broadband transport mechanisms in a communications network. The arrangement includes a narrowband network switch that includes switching intelligence and narrowband switching fabric; and a broadband network switch in communication with the narrowband network switch. The broadband network switch includes only broadband switching fabric. When a first traffic call, destined for a node that has only narrowband capabilities, is received in the narrowband network switch, the switching intelligence in the narrowband network switch utilizes the narrowband switching fabric to route the first traffic call to the narrowband destination node. When a second traffic call, destined for a node that has broadband capabilities, is received in the narrowband network switch, the switching intelligence in the narrowband network switch utilizes the broadband switching fabric in the broadband network switch to route the second traffic call to the broadband destination node.

Thus, the switching intelligence in the narrowband network switch controls both the narrowband switching fabric and the broadband switching fabric.

In Obara, on the other hand, the STM channel switch 102 and the ATM channel switch 103 appear to both be fully functional switches, each containing both call control functionalities (i.e., switching intelligence) and connection control functionalities (i.e.

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switching fabric). A plurality of STM/ATM function modules 161, 16m, 171, 17n are adaptation functions and cell converting functions connected between the two fully functional switches 102 and 103. (FIG. 1; Col. 2, lines 53-57; and col. 3, lines 11-17).

Thus, Obara does not teach or suggest a narrowband network switch that includes switching intelligence that controls both narrowband switching fabric and broadband switching fabric. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection under § 102 and the allowance of amended claim 1 are respectfully requested.

Claims 2 and 4-7 depend from amended claim 1 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 1. Therefore, the allowance of claims 2 and 4-7 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 17 has been amended to recite a method for enabling a migration of a narrowband network to a broadband transport mechanism. The method includes connecting a first network switch having call control functionality and narrowband connection control functionality to a second network switch having only broadband connection control functionality; receiving, at the first network switch, a first traffic call in a first format; and determining by the call control functionality in the first network switch whether the first format is a narrowband format or a broadband format. If the first format is a narrowband format, the first traffic call is forwarded to a first destination node using the narrowband connection control functionality in the first network switch. If the first format is a broadband format, the first traffic call is routed to the second network switch, and the second network switch forwards the first traffic call to a second destination node using the broadband connection control functionality in the second network switch.

Once again, the call control functionality in the first network switch is controlling both the narrowband connection control functionality and the broadband connection control functionality in the second switch. This feature is not taught or suggested by Obara in which two fully functional switches are connected through adaptation function modules. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection under § 102 and the allowance of amended claim 17 are respectfully requested.

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Claims 18, 19, and 21 depend from amended claim 17 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 17. Therefore, the allowance of claims 18, 19, and 21 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 23 is allowable for the same reasons as discussed above for claims 1 and 17.

Independent claim 25 has been amended to clarify that the switching intelligence in the narrowband switch makes the call routing determinations and forwards the call to the appropriate transport mechanism. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection under § 102 and the allowance of amended claim 25 are respectfully requested.

Claims 27-33 depend from amended claim 25 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 25. Therefore, the allowance of claims 27-33 is respectfully requested.

Independent claim 37 has been amended to clarify that the call control functionality in the circuit switch determines whether the destination for the first traffic call has only TDM communications capability, and determines whether the destination for the second traffic call has ATM communications capability, and controls the routing through either the circuit switch or a packet switch based on those determinations. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection under § 102 and the allowance of amended claim 37 are respectfully requested.

Claims 38 and 40 depend from amended claim 37 and recite further limitations in combination with the novel elements of claim 37. Therefore, the allowance of claims 38 and 40 is respectfully requested.

4.) Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In paragraphs 6-7 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 8-14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Obara in view of Borchering (US 5,867,571). The Applicants have canceled claims 8-14 and 16.

In paragraph 8 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 3, 22, 24, 36 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Obara in view of Holler (WO 98/28884). Claims 22 and 36 have been canceled. The Applicants contend that the amendments to base claims 1, 23, and 37 also make dependent claims 3, 24, and

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39 allowable over the combination of Obara and Holler because neither reference teaches or suggests switching intelligence in a narrowband network switch that controls both narrowband switching fabric and broadband switching fabric. Therefore, the withdrawal of the rejection under § 103 and the allowance of claims 3, 24, and 39 are respectfully requested.

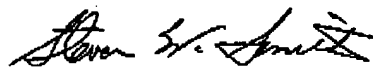
In paragraph 9 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Obara and Borchering, and further in view of Holler. The Applicants have canceled claim 15.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants believe all of the claims currently pending in the Application to be in a condition for allowance. The Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and issue a Notice of Allowance for claims 1-7, 17-19, 21, 23-25, 27-33, and 37-40.

The Applicants request a telephonic interview if the Examiner has any questions or requires any additional information that would further or expedite the prosecution of the Application.

Respectfully submitted,



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